

COMMENDING THE WORLD WAR II VETERANS WHO  
FOUGHT IN THE BATTLE OF THE BULGE

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SEPTEMBER 30, 1999.—Ordered to be printed

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Mr. STUMP, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs,  
submitted the following

R E P O R T

[To accompany H.J. Res. 65]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Veterans' Affairs, to whom was referred the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 65) commending the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with amendments and recommends that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendments are as follows:

Strike out all after the resolving clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

That Congress—

(1) commends the veterans of service in the United States Army who fought during World War II in the German Ardennes offensive known as the Battle of the Bulge;

(2) honors those who gave their lives during that battle;

(3) authorizes the President to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to honor the veterans of the Battle of the Bulge with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and activities; and

(4) calls upon the President to reaffirm the bonds of friendship between the United States and both Belgium and Luxembourg.

Amend the preamble to read as follows:

Whereas the battle in the European theater of operations during World War II known as the Battle of the Bulge was fought from December 16, 1944, to January 25, 1945;

Whereas the Battle of the Bulge was a major German offensive in the Ardennes forest region of Belgium and Luxembourg which took Allied forces by surprise and was intended to split the Allied forces in Europe by breaking through the Allied lines, crippling the Allied fuel supply lines, and exacerbating tensions within the alliance;

Whereas 600,000 American troops participated in the Battle of the Bulge, overcoming numerous disadvantages in the early days of the battle that included fewer numbers, treacherous terrain, and bitter weather conditions;

Whereas the Battle of the Bulge resulted in 81,000 American casualties, of whom approximately 19,000 were killed, with the remainder wounded, captured, or listed as missing in action;

Whereas the worst atrocity involving Americans in the European theater during World War II, known as the Malmedy Massacre, occurred on December 17, 1944, when 86 unarmed American prisoners of war were gunned down by elements of the German 1st SS Panzer Division;

Whereas American forces overcame great odds throughout the battle, including most famously the action of the 101st Airborne Division in holding back German forces at the key Belgian crossroads town of Bastogne, thereby preventing German forces from achieving their main objective of reaching Antwerp as well as the Meuse River line;

Whereas the success of American forces in defeating the German attack made possible the defeat of Nazi Germany four months later in April 1945;

Whereas thousands of United States veterans of the Battle of the Bulge have traveled to Belgium and Luxembourg in the years since the battle to honor their fallen comrades who died during the battle;

Whereas the peoples of Belgium and Luxembourg, symbolizing their friendship and gratitude toward the American soldiers who fought to secure their freedom, have graciously hosted countless veterans groups over the years;

Whereas the city of Bastogne has an annual commemoration of the battle and its annual Nuts Fair has been expanded to include commemoration of the legendary one-word reply of "Nuts" by Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe of the 101st Airborne Division when called upon by the opposing German commander at Bastogne to surrender his forces to much stronger German forces;

Whereas the Belgian people erected the Mardasson Monument to honor the Americans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge as well as to commemorate their sacrifices and service during World War II;

Whereas the 55th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in 1999 will be marked by many commemorative events by Americans, Belgians, and Luxembourgers; and

Whereas the friendship between the United States and both Belgium and Luxembourg is strong today in part because of the Battle of the Bulge: Now, therefore, be it

## INTRODUCTION

On August 5, 1999, the Honorable Chris Smith of New Jersey, along with the Honorable Bob Stump, Chairman of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs and Honorable Lane Evans, Ranking Democratic Member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, introduced H.J. Res. 65, to commend the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

The Full Committee met on September 22, 1999 and ordered H.J. Res. 65 reported, as amended, favorably to the House by unanimous voice vote.

## BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION

The battle in the European theater of operations during World War II known as the Battle of the Bulge was fought from December 16, 1944, to January 25, 1945. The Battle of the Bulge was a major German offensive in the Ardennes forest region of Belgium and Luxembourg which took Allied forces by surprise. This failed offensive was intended to split the Allied forces in Europe by breaking through the Allied lines, crippling the Allied fuel supply

lines, and exacerbating tension within the alliance. Over 600,000 American troops participated in the Battle of the Bulge, overcoming numerous disadvantages in the early days of the battle that included fewer troops, treacherous terrain, and bitter weather conditions. American forces sustained 81,000 casualties during the engagement. One of the worst atrocities involving Americans in the European theater during World War II is known as the Malmedy Massacre. On December 17, 1944, elements of the German 1st SS Panzer Division gunned down 86 unarmed American prisoners of war. One of the most memorable triumphs during the battle was the actions of the 101st Airborne Division in holding back German forces at the key Belgian crossroads town of Bastogne, thereby preventing them from achieving their main objective of reaching Antwerp as well as the Meuse River line. The success of American forces in defeating the German attack made possible the defeat of Nazi Germany four months later in April 1945. Thousands of United States veterans of the Battle of the Bulge have traveled to Belgium in the years since the battle to honor fallen comrades who died during the battle. The people of Belgium and Luxembourg, symbolizing the friendship and gratitude toward the American soldiers who fought to secure their freedom, have graciously hosted countless veterans groups over the years.

The city of Bastogne has an annual commemoration of the battle, and its annual Nuts Fair has been expanded to include commemorations of the legendary one-word reply of “Nuts” by Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe of the 101st Airborne Division when called upon by the opposing German commander at Bastogne to surrender his forces to much stronger German forces. The Belgian people erected the Mardasson Monument to honor the Americans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge as well as to commemorate their sacrifices and service during World War II. The 55th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge in 1999 will be marked by many commemorative events by American and Belgians and Luxembourgers, and the friendship between the United States and Belgium and Luxembourg is strong today in part because of the Battle of the Bulge. Accordingly, the Committee believes it is appropriate to commend the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge.

#### OVERSIGHT FINDINGS

No oversight findings have been submitted to the Committee by the Committee on Government Reform.

#### CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

The following letter was received from the Congressional Budget Office concerning the cost of the reported bill:

U.S. CONGRESS,  
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,  
*Washington, DC, September 24, 1999.*

Hon. BOB STUMP,  
*Chairman, Committee on Veterans' Affairs,  
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.J. Res. 65, a joint resolution commending the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and for other purposes.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Evan W. Christman, who can be reached at 226-2840.

Sincerely,

DAN L. CRIPPEN,  
*Director*

Enclosure.

CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE COST ESTIMATE

*H.J. Res. 65, Joint resolution commending the World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and for other purposes, As ordered reported by the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs on September 22, 1999*

H.J. Res. 65 would commend World War II veterans who fought in the Battle of the Bulge for their service to the United States. The joint resolution would attest to the friendly relationship between Belgium and the United States and would authorize the President to issue a proclamation urging Americans to honor veterans of the Battle of the Bulge. CBO estimates that this joint resolution would have no budgetary impact.

Because H.J. Res. 65 would not affect direct spending or receipts, pay-as-you-go procedures would not apply. This joint resolution contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates and would not affect the budgets of state, local, or tribal governments.

This estimate was prepared by Evan W. Christman, who can be reached at 226-2840. This estimate was approved by Robert A. Sunshine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

INFLATIONARY IMPACT STATEMENT

The enactment of the reported resolution would have no inflationary impact.

APPLICABILITY TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

The reported resolution would not be applicable to the legislative branch under the Congressional Accountability Act, Public Law 104-1.

STATEMENT OF FEDERAL MANDATES

The reported resolution would not establish a federal mandate under the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, Public Law 104-4.

## STATEMENT OF CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY

Pursuant to Article I, section 8 of the United States Constitution, the reported resolution is authorized by Congress' power to "provide for the common Defence and general Welfare of the United States".

